Better Homes & Gardens
Christmas IDEAS
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TOUR FIVE JOYFUL HOMES
Handmade Holiday
ORNAMENTS, WREATHS, GARLANDS & GIFT WRAP
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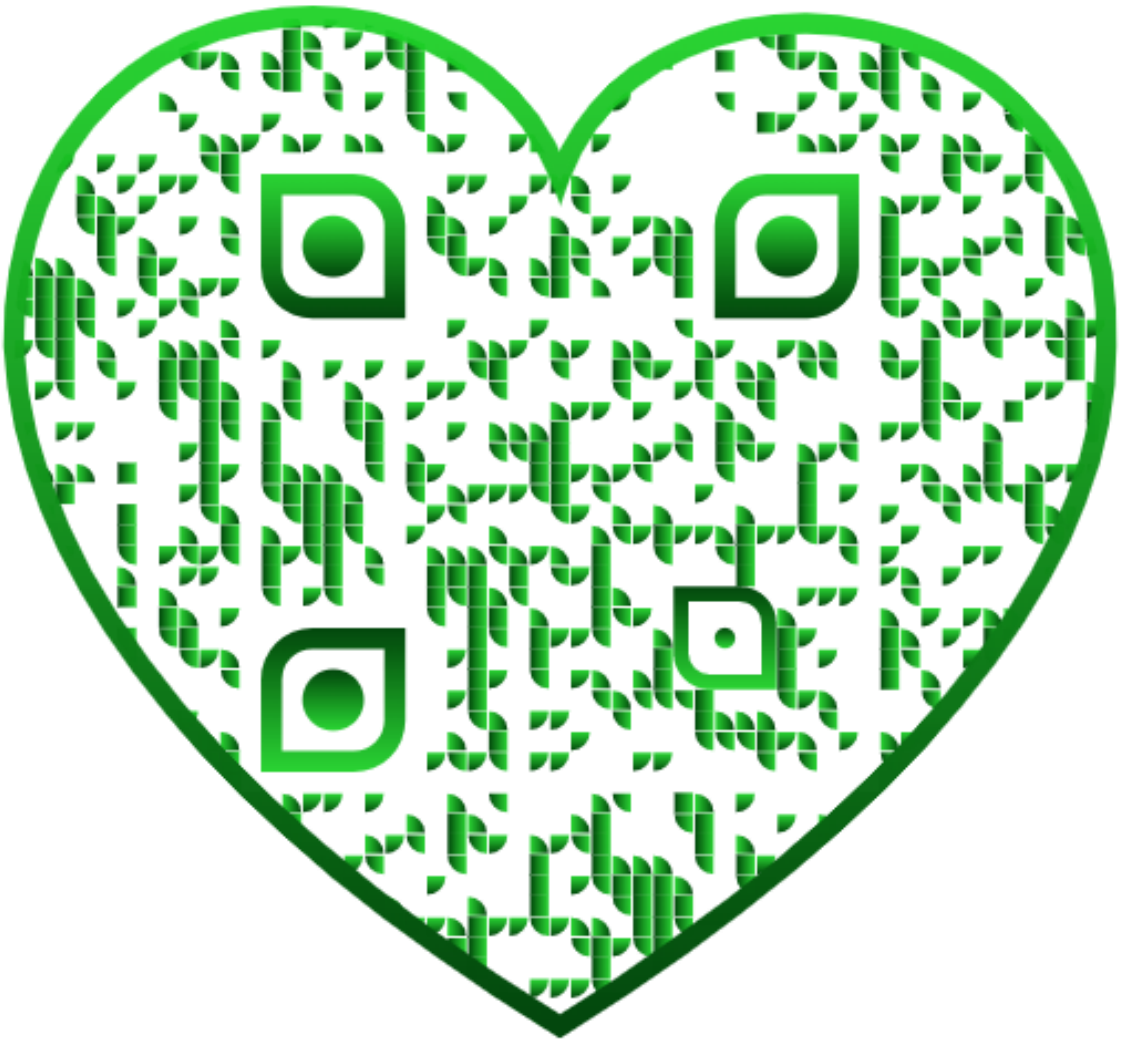
2025



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Christmas Ideas

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FOR EDITORIAL QUESTIONS, EMAIL MEREDITH.PREMIUMPUBLISHING@DOTDASHMDP.COM
OR WRITE US AT *CHRISTMAS IDEAS*,
PREMIUM PUBLISHING,
1716 LOCUST ST., DES MOINES, IA 50309-3023

PREMIUM PUBLISHING
Vice President & General Manager JEREMY BILOON
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CIRCULATION
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Vice President & Head of Sales, Lifestyle TIFFANY EHASZ
tiffany.ehasz@dotdashmdp.com
Executive Director & Food and Beverage Lead DAVID GINSBERG
david.ginsberg@dotdashmdp.com
Executive Director & Home/CPG Lead MARGARET GRAFF
margaret.graff@dotdashmdp.com

ADVERTISING OPERATIONS
1716 Locust St., Des Moines, IA 50309-3023
Production Director PATRICK MCGOWAN
Senior Production Manager, Country Home JULEE EVANS
Production Managers APRIL GROSS, TREVI JONES, ASHLEY SCHAUBROECK

DIRECT MEDIA
Executive Director TYLER HUB
tyler.hub@dotdashmdp.com

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From the Editor

Nicole Dean
Senior Editor, Holidays

Christmas in COLOR! This issue is packed with so much vibrancy, celebration, and eye candy, we couldn't help but feel those warm emotions that come with the holidays as we paged through our final edits.

We want to help you incorporate the latest trends into your own home—but in simple, inexpensive ways . One big trend: maximalist front doors. Think giant bows, extravagant arches, and life-size nutcrackers. Check out "Glitter & Gold," *page 36*, to see how influencer Stephanie Hanna brought all of these looks to life.

If traditional red and green has your heart, see tree-trimming tips from a professional tree decorator in "Wrapped in Cheer," *page 56*, or classic styling ideas in "Timeless Tidings," *page 72*.

And before you send your recyclables to the bin, take a look at our projects sprinkled throughout these pages. Our project producers used thrifted sweaters, leftover cardboard boxes, and crafts store basics to make beautiful wreaths, garlands, and decor, proving that even the simplest of items can sparkle and shine.

We hope you feel inspired to try new ideas in decorating, make memories with loved ones, and most importantly, take a breath to enjoy this festive season of the year. Cheers!

Nicole Dean

TRIM *with* FLAIR

Start with greenery, then layer on ornaments, garland, and soft elements to re-create this classic-meets-modern aesthetic in your home.

photographer **ADAM ALBRIGHT**
producer **LESLIE POYZER**

GET THE LOOK

1. HOLLY PICKS
Artificial Red Berry Stems, $6 for 30; *walmart.com*

2. FAUX GARLAND
Original Real Touch Norfolk Pine Garland, $40; *christmasloft.com*

3. GLITTERY ORBS
Jetec Artificial Pine Cone Ornaments, $18 for 8; *amazon.com*

4. PLEATED STARBURSTS
Paper Fans in White, $1 for three sizes (6, 8, and 10 inches); *hobbylobby.com*

5. TREE FIGURINES
Creative Co-Op Stoneware Trees, $17–$19; *amazon.com*

6. BULB ORNAMENTS
GameXcel Large Christmas Balls, $20 for 36; *amazon.com*

7. KNIT STOCKING
Fesciory 18-inch Christmas Stocking in Burgundy, $10 for 1; *amazon.com*

8. ANGULAR TAPERS
Gold Geometric Taper Candle Holder, $15 each; *worldmarket.com*

9.PALM FANS
Dried Palm Spear Pick, $3 each; *hobbylobby.com*

10. BEADED GARLAND
Kurt Adler 9-foot Natural Wooden Bead Garland, $14; *walmart.com*

In Good *Company*

Crafting, baking, building, collecting. These mavens of creation bring yuletide treasures to life throughout the holiday season.

writer **LACEY HOWARD**

Harmony Lynn Goodson

Instagram: @harmonylynngoodson

Q: Your gingerbread creations are so magical. How did you learn to bake?
A: I'm a self-taught baker. When I started exploring it more seriously, gingerbread felt like the perfect canvas: it's nostalgic, versatile, and offers endless room to play with design. It took a lot of trial and error, and I continue to learn from faulty design ideas every year.

Q: Do you bake to share with family and friends?
A: I have an undeniable sweet tooth, so most of my baking starts with satisfying my own cravings. Luckily, my family and friends don't mind me sharing. My 12-year-old son is my number one fan and taste tester, and he provides expert feedback.

Q: Where do you find inspiration for your creations?
A: I draw a lot of inspiration from historic architecture and classic Christmas decorations. I also make haunted gingerbread houses during Halloween and bake gingerbread cookies year-round.

OH SO SWEET

Opposite: Harmony created her own shopping dreamscape complete with tiny details inside each window display. **Above:** Homemade eggnog tastes extra delicious when paired with freshly baked gingerbread cookies. **Left:** "I always have excess dough when I finish a project, so I make lots of cookies to share," says the self-taught baker. **Far left:** Welcome to Frosty's ice plaza! Royal icing holds the house together, buttercream mimics snow, and sprinkles adorn the garland. "Frosty is made of fondant, and my secret to the etched windows is gelatin sheet," Harmony says.

> "If I can envision it, I'll find a way to bring it to life. The challenge is what fuels my creativity."
>
> –HARMONY LYNN GOODSON

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HARMONY LYNN GOODSON

Kristi Snarsky

Instagram: @kristisnarsky

Q: You clearly have an eye for vintage treasures. What are your favorite holiday collections?
A: The needleworks—particularly crewels and needlepoints that are Christmas or winter themed—and my aluminum trees and ornaments. I also love collections of vintage smalls that I can mix into displays throughout the house: Putz houses, ornament hook boxes, finials, and brass animals.

Q: How do you bring in nonholiday items to decorate at Christmastime?
A: I try to translate my collections into different seasons—in part because I like seeing the way things look with different holiday accents, but also because storage is limited. On my bookshelves, for example, Cathrineholm lasagna pans and bowls become pedestals, while vintage recipe boxes act as colorful, textural backdrops. I keep most of my vintage glass out year-round and mix in seasonal details, like swung glass vases and pitchers that complement the rainbows of my ornaments and finials.

Q: We love your use of color. What inspires you to decorate in rainbows?
A: When I first had the opportunity to decorate my own spaces, I began with a color palette approach, decorating rooms with a limited set of hues. Pretty quickly, I found myself wanting to break my own rules. Now I have a more expansive approach, where rooms and spaces are still tied together thematically, but then I experiment with lots of color.

VINTAGE & BRIGHT **Top:** Kristi and her husband, Tom, decorate their midcentury aluminum tree in vintage glass ornaments. A felt tree skirt hosts a pile of old ornament boxes. **Above left:** These bookshelves turn into mini Christmas scenes every year, starting with vintage recipe boxes stacked up to create the backdrops. Kristi places Cathrineholm enamelware upside down to make a stage for her laser-cut wood midcentury-inspired houses from World Market. Bottle-brush trees and Cathrineholm bowls flank the vignettes. **Above right:** Kristi rotates her most cherished ornaments on an accordion peg rack, which hangs above a rainbow of L. E. Smith swung glass vases. The vases were made between 1958 and 1976 by pressing molten glass into a mold, letting it cool slightly, then swinging the glass to create an elongated mouth. **Opposite:** Bentwood teardrop shelves and a gallery wall of crewel embroidery pieces are hung thanks to Tom. "Our wall art would be a lot closer to the ground without him," Kristi says.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KRISTI SNARSKY

“The more vintage decor I’ve accumulated—especially from the ’60s and ’70s—the more vibrant my spaces have become.”

–KRISTI SNARSKY

Cassandra 'Sunny' Evans

Instagram: @northwoodsfolk

Q: Your projects are so creative. When did your love for crafting begin?
A: I was a crafty kid—always cutting, gluing, painting, or making something out of nothing. I loved collecting bits of nature, scraps of fabric, or odds and ends and turning them into something meaningful. Over the years, crafting became more than just a hobby; it allowed me to slow down, connect with the seasons, and make beauty out of everyday things.

Q: Tell us about your holiday projects.
A: Christmas is definitely one of my favorite times to create. I love making things that feel simple, natural, and a little nostalgic—like dried orange garlands, salt dough ornaments, and foraged wreaths. I'm big on using what I already have or can gather outside, so there's usually a lot of evergreen clippings, twine, and bits of dried herbs or citrus involved.

Q: How does your family get in on the fun?
A: Our three boys are the biggest reasons I do any of it. They absolutely love creating with me, and I love the opportunity to connect with them without the distraction of screens or the busyness of life. They bring such a fun, curious energy to the process. They're just in it for the joy of making.

Q: Do you bake, cook, and craft to share with family, friends, and neighbors?
A: Oh, yes! Sharing is one of the best parts. It feels really special to pass something along that I've made with my hands. I love that slower, more intentional kind of giving. It's part of what makes the holiday season so magical. ✻

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CASSANDRA EVANS

> Magic comes from slowing down and making things by hand—it just feels more meaningful that way.
>
> –SUNNY EVANS

NATURAL ELEGANCE

Opposite: Sunny fills mushroom-shaped Linzer cookies with sweet jam. "They're as charming as they are delicious," she says. **Far left:** A vibrant cider packed with colorful fruits, herbs, and spices is Sunny's go-to herbal remedy for staying well through the colder months. **Left:** To make these charming mushroom ornaments, Sunny glued together pinecones, sticks, and a bit of moss found in her yard.

Above: A simple, nature-inspired wall hanging made with foraged evergreens, dried orange slices, and twine "brings a bit of the winter woods indoors," Sunny says. **Left:** Sunny freezes berries, greenery, and spices in a donut pan to make these ice ornaments, which sparkle when hung on tree branches outdoors and are fun to watch melt as the weather gets warmer.

what cheer

Glittering metallics and punchy colors give a nostalgic feel to these handcrafted projects. Search your supply stash and recycling bin to make a rainbow wreath, tree topper, package embellishments, ornaments, and strings of garland.

To make this swag, work from the bottom up by slipping a hanging loop of one ball through the loops of two others. Slip the loop of a new ball through the first loop, then add two more balls onto the new loop. Repeat until it reaches a desired length.

Instructions begin on page 20.

ALL IS *bright*

Illuminate the holidays with *handmade decor* crafted from yarn, cardboard, and upcycled supplies.

writer **LAUREN LANDERS**
photographer **CARSON DOWNING**
stylist **JESSICA THOMAS**
producer **KIM HUTCHISON**

starburst tree topper

Add a touch of nostalgia to your tree with a star-shaped topper that reads retro but is crafted from cereal boxes, metallic crepe paper, and a few basic craft items.

oversize ornaments

Upcycling never looked more festive than with these big baubles made from cracker boxes—cut, folded, and glued into traditional ornament shapes. The orbs look equally eye-catching on holiday trees or mantelscapes.

pom-pom wreath

Made from Christmas bulbs and colorful DIY pom-poms, this whimsical wreath delivers an unexpected twist to holiday decor. It's so cheery, you may want to leave it up year-round!

For a fuller-looking wreath, use pom-poms and ornaments in varied sizes.

dimensional toppers

Give gift wrapping a handmade feel by adding pom-poms, honeycomb shapes, and a bit of ribbon or twine.

metallic ornaments

These glittering silver and gold ornaments exude a vintage vibe but are made with the simplest of materials: foil muffin liners, glue, and twine.

honeycomb & corrugated garlands

Sweeten the season with garlands crafted from honeycomb balls and strips of painted cardboard. A handy template makes it easy to trim the honeycomb into fun shapes. Attach cording and beads, then hang the strings in any space that needs more holiday cheer.

Instructions

STARBURST TREE TOPPER

page 14

MATERIALS

- 3 cereal boxes
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Crafts knife
- Crepe paper: golden, silver
- Mod Podge
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Florists wire
- Wooden half-sphere

1. Open each cereal box along its seam, lay flat, and cut the box into sections at the creases. Mark vertical lines in 1-inch intervals along the largest rectangle pieces. Score along the lines with a crafts knife, being careful not to cut through the cardboard.

2. Cut two scored rectangle sections in half lengthwise. Accordion fold all four sections and flatten out. Cut golden crepe paper to fit and attach to the cardboard with Mod Podge. Repeat for all four cardboard sections. Let dry.

3. Refold the sections along the scored lines. Cut a long point on one end. Secure the opposite ends of the folds with a dot of hot glue. (This should create a fan.) Repeat with all four rectangles. Fan the folded pieces out. Hot-glue each together to create a golden starburst.

4. For the silver starburst, repeat steps 1 and 2 (use silver crepe paper). Refold the sections along the scored lines. Cut a long point on one end of each of the folded sections. Hot-glue the ends of each section together to create a long accordion. Then hot-glue each end of the accordion together to create a large accordion circle.

5. Cut two 6-inch-diameter cardboard circles; hot-glue one of the circles to the back of the silver starburst.

6. Nestle the gold starburst on top of the silver starburst. Hot-glue in place.

7. To create the tree topper hanger, poke two holes, 1 inch apart, above and below the center of the second circle. Thread florists wire through each set of holes. With the ends poking out, hot-glue to the back of the starburst.

8. Decoupage silver crepe paper onto a wooden half-sphere. Hot-glue the wooden sphere to the middle of the golden starburst.

OVERSIZE ORNAMENTS

page 15

MATERIALS

- Upcycled cardboard food boxes
- Scissors
- Printable Oversize Ornaments templates (go to *BHG.com/AllIsBright*)
- Pencil
- Crafts knife
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Crafts paint in various colors
- Crepe paper: golden, various colors
- Glue stick
- Corrugated cardboard
- Wooden rings and beads
- Golden cording

1. Open a box along the glued seam, lay flat, and cut the box flaps off in a straight line. (Don't remove the glued flap that held the box together.)

2. Print the Oversize Ornaments templates, adjusting the size to fit your box, and cut out. Choose one template, then trace the number indicated on the template (either 8 or 10) onto the cardboard with the centers aligned. (Refer to the diagram on the template.)

3. Using scissors, cut around the traced ornaments. Use a crafts knife to score the center vertical lines, being careful not to cut through the cardboard.

4. *If decorating with paint:* Fold along the scored lines to form the ornament. Fold the tabs and secure inside the ornament with hot glue. Let dry, then paint in a color of your choice. *If decorating with crepe paper:* Cut crepe paper to size and secure to the flat ornament shape with a glue stick. Let dry and form the ornament as above.

5. Paint corrugated cardboard in matching shades of your ornaments; let dry. Cut into ½-inch-wide strips, then hot-glue to ornament edges. (Alternatively, cut crepe paper into ½-inch-wide strips, and adhere with a glue stick to ornament edges.)

6. For the ornament tops, cut circles from cardboard to fit. Paint or glue crepe paper to circles or wooden rings and beads; let dry. Glue to the top and bottom of each ornament. For a layered look, use a combination of beads, rings, and cardboard circles.

7. Cut a 6-inch length of cord, fold in half, knot, and hot-glue to the top of the ornament to create a hanger.

POM-POM WREATH

page 16

MATERIALS

- Extra-large pom-pom maker
- Yarn in various colors and weights
- Zip ties
- Fabric scissors

- Floral wire stems
- Wire snips
- 24-inch wire wreath form
- 4- to 5-inch silver and golden plastic ball ornaments
- Felt sheets
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks

1. For extra-large pom-poms, follow the manufacturer's instructions on the pom-pom maker to make pom-poms in assorted sizes, colors, and yarn weights. For extra-extra-large pom-poms, insert a zip tie lengthwise through the center of a full skein of yarn. Join zip tie ends and tighten until the skein forms a U-shape. Cut around the outside middle of yarn, tightening the zip tie as you go. Make about 30 pom-poms total. Shape the finished pom-poms with scissors. Cut floral wire stems in half using wire snips. Thread a wire through the center of each pom-pom.

2. Position pom-poms and ball ornaments on a wreath form to find a layout you like. Once satisfied, attach each pom-pom by twisting the floral wire around the frame back. Remove the wire hangers from the ball ornaments; attach the ornaments to the wreath form by threading floral wire around the ornament top and twisting onto the form.

3. Create a hanging loop with floral wire and attach to the back of the wreath. To prevent scratches on your hanging surface from the wires, cut felt sheets into 2- to 3-inch strips and hot-glue onto exposed wires on the back of the wreath.

DIMENSIONAL TOPPERS

page 17

MATERIALS

- Extra-large pom-pom maker
- Yarn in various colors and weights
- Printable Honeycomb Shapes templates (go to *BHG.com/AllIsBright*)
- Honeycomb balls
- Double-sided tape
- Yarn, cording, or ribbon

1. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on the pom-pom maker to make pom-poms in assorted colors and weights.

2. Print the Honeycomb Shapes, adjusting the size as needed; trace and cut out the shapes from honeycomb balls in various colors.

3. Attach pom-poms or honeycomb shapes to wrapped gifts with double-sided tape and yarn, cording, or ribbon.

METALLIC ORNAMENTS

page 18

MATERIALS

- Metallic foil jumbo cupcake liners
- Glue stick
- Golden cording
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks

1. Flatten then fold 24 cupcake liners in half, metallic sides facing inward. Stack the liners on top of each other, gluing the non-metallic sides of the liners one by one until all liners are adhered. Let dry.

2. Gently unfurl the liners to form a ball shape, glue outer liner ends together, and let dry.

3. Cut an 18-inch length of cording, fold in half, and knot, leaving the ends loose for a tassel-like look. Thread the cord through the center of the cupcake liner; hot-glue in place.

HONEYCOMB & CORRUGATED GARLANDS

page 19

MATERIALS

- Printable Honeycomb Shapes templates (go to *BHG.com/AllIsBright*)
- 20 to 30 colorful 6- to 10-inch paper honeycomb balls
- Scissors or crafts knife
- Paper straws
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Double-sided tape
- 16-millimeter silver round wooden beads
- Golden elastic cording
- Corrugated cardboard paper roll
- Crafts paint in various colors
- Paintbrush
- Crepe paper in various colors
- Glue stick
- ⅛-inch paper punch
- 12-millimeter golden round wooden beads
- Tapestry needle

Honeycomb garland:

1. Print and cut out Honeycomb Shapes templates, adjusting size as needed. Trace template onto unopened honeycomb ball, cut out, and remove hanging string. Cut paper straw to fit inner fold of honeycomb shape; attach to inner fold with hot glue. Open honeycomb shape and secure around straw with double-sided tape to form a "bead." Repeat the process to create more honeycomb "beads," leaving some honeycomb "beads" round for variety.

2. Cut a 60-inch length of cording and tie a loop on the end. Thread the cording through the straw on the honeycomb "bead," then one silver bead. Repeat until the cording is fully beaded. Tie a hanging loop in the cord end to finish.

Corrugated garland:

1. Cut a 17x17-inch square from a corrugated roll. Then cut a diagonal line from corner to corner (you should have two triangles). From each triangle, cut a 7x10-inch rectangle so that the corrugated stripes are at an angle. (This will help the shapes open like an accordion.) Repeat until you've cut six 7x10-inch pieces. Each 7x10-inch piece will make eight strips or four individual garland shapes. You'll need approximately 24 shapes to create a 4-foot garland. Paint the corrugated sides in various colors; let dry.

2. Cut 7x10-inch pieces of crepe paper in coordinating colors to the paint. Adhere to the smooth side of the cardboard with a glue stick; let dry.

3. Cut each corrugated piece into 1¼x10-inch strips. Stack two strips in the same color so that the crepe paper is facing the corrugated cardboard; hot-glue the strips together at the top and bottom only. Repeat with the remaining strips.

4. Sandwich two stacked strips together and hot-glue the outside of the shapes just at the center. Repeat until all strips are attached. Punch holes in the top and middle of each strip.

5. Cut a 60-inch length of cord, tie a loop on the end, and use a needle to thread all but 6 inches of cord through the middle hole of the first strip. Double-knot the cord inside the strip, add a golden bead, and thread the cord through the middle hole on the opposite side of the strip. Repeat until all strips are attached with cord and beads.

6. Holding the cord ends, carefully pull the garland outward to open the strips. Double-knot the cord inside the last strip; tie a second loop for hanging.

7. Cut another 60-inch length of cording and thread through the top holes of the strips, securing with knots as you go. Tie hanging loops on the cord ends to finish.

Once Upon a CHRISTMAS

OUT WITH THE NEW AND IN WITH THE OLD. TIMELESS, ONE-OF-A-KIND TREASURES DAZZLE IN THIS FAMILY'S COZY LIBRARY-TURNED-MUSIC ROOM.

writer **LAUREN LANDERS** *photographer* **ADAM ALBRIGHT**

DECKED OUT

Homeowner Liz Sickinger places her vintage-inspired Christmas tree front and center in her family's music room. Vintage touches are featured throughout the space, like an embroidered Santa pillow on the couch and gifts wrapped in traditional papers tucked beneath the tree. Every element adds to the room's nostalgic feel.

Make sure tree branches are sturdy enough to hold precious antique ornaments. When hanging, wrap the wire hanger tightly around the branch a few times to prevent accidental falls and breaks.

Christmas has always felt magical

for Liz Sickinger. "I've loved it ever since I was a little girl, especially growing up in Ohio with our cold winters," says Liz, owner of Six Vintage Rugs (on Instagram @sixvintagerugs). "It always meant lots of fires, family, board games, and hibernating." Now, as an adult, Liz finds Christmas has only taken on more meaning. "It's a big creative outlet for me," she says. "I like to come up with different twists for the decor each year."

Over time, Liz has dabbled with different styles, but she says it wasn't until she started decorating with vintage pieces that her design sense really came together. "My home became more of a reflection of me and my family," she says. "It was such a natural progression for me to move to vintage holiday decor, because nothing is more authentic than 'old, classic Christmas.' It's a holiday that's so rich with history and nostalgia."

Each year, Liz transforms her family's library into a music room—a space where they enjoy listening to Christmas records and their daughter playing the piano. Her decorating style evolves as she explores antiques stores and discovers one-of-a-kind treasures. "This year, I went heavy on the Shiny Brites. I wanted tons of baubles and was open to all things kitschy," Liz says.

While Liz admits that shopping vintage isn't always convenient, she finds that the impact it has on her home and the environment is worth it. "I may change my Christmas look a little each year, but my decorating mentality remains the same," she says. "One-of-a-kind vintage is best, and more is more. You can't be too 'extra' at Christmastime."

FAMILY TRADITION Liz, husband Jordan, daughter Emerson, and French bulldogs Midge and Chunk enjoy the music room, *above*, where Liz combines vintage finds with evergreen garlands and other natural touches to add warmth. Her existing collection of antiques and paintings integrate seamlessly into her holiday design.

> "Listen to your gut and pay attention to the things that spark joy for you—even if it's not how everyone else is decorating."
>
> –HOMEOWNER LIZ SICKINGER

SANTA'S WORKSHOP

In this cozy book nook, Liz left many of her existing antiques in place and added just a few holiday items—like a Santa wall hanging and a ceramic Christmas tree—to make the workspace feel more festive.

Shop for Christmas items year-round to find the best prices and selection. Check estate sales, flea markets, and online auctions to score great finds.

SEASON'S GREETINGS As a nod to Christmases past, Liz hung old holiday cards from ornament hangers on beaded garland above her tree, *top*.

CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN Small vintage stockings (from maker Penny & Ivy found at Jenni Yolo Home in Milwaukee) hang from mini clothespins to make an Advent calendar, *above left*. Numbered tags count the days. "I fill them with makeup brushes, face masks, and lipsticks for my daughter. She loves it!" Liz says.

KEEPSAKE CORNER Pretty in blue, Liz's Regency-style couch, *above*, provides an elegant backdrop for her collection of pillows. The garland of tiny stockings and an evergreen bough draw the eyes up, while a playful sprig of evergreen adds a Christmas touch to an antique portrait on the adjoining wall.

HOLIDAY HELPER
A timeless figure of old Saint Nick observes the festivities from the top of an antique picture frame, *left*.

BRIGHT IDEA Traditionally made from wood or cardboard, Putz houses, *below*, are classic Christmas collectibles commonly displayed on a mantel or windowsill. When this vintage one Liz ordered online arrived smaller than expected, she placed it on a tree branch with a twinkle light inside. "The way it lights up is so pretty!"

THRIFT LIKE A PRO

Liz Sickinger shares her favorite places for finding one-of-a-kind holiday decor.

GET INSPIRED

Before you start thrifting, have a general idea of the look you're going for. This can help you track down the right vintage decorations and ensure your final design feels consistent and planned. Liz recommends browsing through old design books or magazines for inspiration.

KNOW WHERE TO GO

Once you've pinpointed your style, the treasure hunt can begin. "I hop on Facebook Marketplace or head to an antiques store to see what stands out to me. That's the fun part!" says Liz, who's unearthed some of her best vintage finds at antiques malls, on Chairish, and on eBay.

REMEMBER ABC

It takes time to find enough holiday pieces to decorate an entire tree or room, but Liz has a tip for that too: "ABC: Always Buy Christmas," she says. "You'll get a bigger selection and better prices if you keep an eye out for Christmas items year-round at thrift shops, flea markets, and antiques stores."

merry making

Cozy knits and textured wool transform into wreaths, door decor, and ornaments using just a few items you may already have on hand.

writer **KELLY ROBERSON** *photographer* **JACOB FOX**
producer **JENI WRIGHT**

For a pleasing colorway, pick one neutral, a pattern or two, and several shades of a single hue for the flowers (we chose pinks).

Instructions begin on *page 34*.

Soft Poinsettias

Raid your fabric leftovers for scraps of washed wool or search the thrift store for tired sweaters to fashion these never-need-to-water poinsettias. After cutting out petals, pull the project together with crafts store supplies. Wire gives the petals structure, while painted wood swizzle sticks become the stamens.

BOUNTIFUL BOW

This fancy knot, *opposite*, is cleverly made from plastic flashing, a pliable vinyl material that comes in a roll and is often used for roofing (so it can withstand the elements). Use our printable template to make one, then embellish it with braided yarn, velvet ribbon, and rope.

TEXTILE *Trio*

Rework a winter hat, scarf, and fabric strips to create these three simple wreaths. Beads and bows add an extra layer of contrast.

Frosted Sprigs

A few snips of your scissors gives white wool a fringy look that resembles evergreen branches dusted in snow. A transparent bow and felt holly berries offer a sweet pop of color and texture.

Eclectic ORNAMENTS

Tassels and baubles in a muted color palette add softness to a tree or garland. Cover a round foam ball with a scrap piece of sweater or scarf, or wrap a papier-mâché ornament with strips of felt and yarn. For a playful addition to your holiday decor, top a yarn tassel with a copper tube and painted wood bead.

Choose scarves with a cable-knit pattern for added depth and visual interest.

Instructions

BOUNTIFUL BOW

page 28

MATERIALS

- Printable Bow template (go to *BHG.com/MerryWreaths*)
- Off-white vinyl flashing (we used Union Corrugating 14-inch x 30-foot Vinyl Roll Flashing)
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Florists wire
- Wire snips
- Rubber cement
- Decorative accents: yarn in various weights, natural cotton twisted rope, velvet ribbon
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks

1. Print and cut out the Bow template. Trace the pattern pieces onto vinyl flashing. (You should have two bow loops, one center knot, and two bow tails.)

2. Loosely fold one of the bow loops in half, lining up the ends on top of each other. Use a hole punch to punch through both pieces where indicated on the template (about 1 inch in from the end and 2 inches in from the side). Cut a 14-inch length of florists wire using wire snips; insert through the set of holes and twist on the back side to secure into a loop shape. Repeat with the other loop piece. Lay the looped pieces on top of each other, hole punches lined up; secure with a length of florists wire.

3. Make the center knot by punching two holes on each end of the cut piece of flashing as indicated on the template (about 2 inches apart). Wrap the knot piece around the center of the loop pieces where they are attached to each other. (The punched holes of the knot piece should overlap on the back.) Cut a length of wire and insert through the punched holes on the center knot piece, twisting together to secure.

4. Stiffen the bow loops, center knot, and bow tails by applying rubber cement to the entire front of each piece. Let dry.

5. Decorate the bow in a pattern of your choosing. We used long strips of finger-knit yarn (search online: "how to finger knit"), rope, frayed velvet ribbon, and thick braided yarn. Attach each material to the bow with hot glue or a thick layer of rubber cement. Let dry.

6. Hot-glue a bow tail piece inside the bottom of each bow loop. (The tail ends will naturally curl.)

7. To hang, fold a piece of wire into a loop and thread through the punched holes on the back of the bow.

SOFT POINSETTIAS

page 29

MATERIALS

- Printable Petal and Leaf templates (go to *BHG.com/MerryWreaths*)
- Scraps of wool fabric, washed
- Fabric scissors
- Florists wire
- Wire snips
- Fabric glue
- 15-inch round foam wreath form
- Straight pins
- E6000 clear glue
- Wood ball swizzle sticks
- Crafts paint: green, yellow
- Paintbrush

1. Print and cut out the Petal and Leaf templates.

2. You will need five flowers total. For each flower, you need six large petals, four small petals, and one leaf—all double-sided. To cut each petal or leaf, double a piece of wool, trace one of the templates onto it, and cut out so you have two identical pieces of wool for each petal or leaf.

3. Cut an 8-inch length of florists wire using wire snips for each petal and leaf. Place fabric glue along the middle and outside edge of one petal/leaf pair. Set the wire in the center glue line, then sandwich the other petal pair on top. Press to secure. Repeat with each petal and leaf.

4. Assemble a flower by holding four small petals in a bunch, then group the large petals around the small petals. Add a leaf to the bunch. Cut and wrap a 4-inch wire length snugly around the petal stems. Bend the petals out and up to shape each flower.

5. Cut 1-inch-wide strips of wool and wrap around the wreath form; secure the ends with straight pins.

6. Using scissors, gently puncture the wreath form, cutting through the wool, to create five holes equidistant around the form just big enough to insert the petal/leaf wires. Fill each hole with E6000 glue, then insert the wires. (You may need to trim the floral wire to ensure the flower rests on the form.) Repeat with all five flowers.

7. Trim swizzle sticks to 1½ inches long. Paint stick stems green and centers yellow to look like stamens. Let dry, then glue to flower centers.

TEXTILE TRIO

page 30

MATERIALS

- Stocking hat
- Fabric scissors
- 8-inch wire wreath form
- Needle and thread
- Florists wire
- Green velvet ribbon
- Pink washed wool fabric or ribbon
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Knit scarf
- 12-inch wire wreath form
- 14-inch wood bead wreath (we found this one at a crafts store)
- 1-inch wood beads
- Crafts paint in a color of your choosing
- Paintbrush
- Ribbon in varying widths, colors, and patterns
- 12-inch single wire wreath ring

Green ruffle wreath:

1. Remove the puff ball from the top of a knit hat, if present. Cut the string that gathers the top of the hat together (the hat should look like a tube).

2. Choose an area of the hat where you like the pattern, then cut a wide horizontal strip out of the tube (it should be about twice the width of the wire wreath form).

3. Stretch the cut hat strip onto the 8-inch wire wreath form. Cinch the raw edges together on the back side of the form using a needle and thread or florists wire.

4. Create the ruffle accent by cutting a length of green velvet ribbon that is twice as long as the circumference of the wreath form. Using a needle and thread, stitch a wide straight stitch along one edge of the ribbon. Cinch to gather the ribbon, creating a ruffle. Hot-glue the ruffle to the back edge of the wreath.

5. Cut a long strip of pink wool or ribbon. Tie in a bow, then hot-glue the center of the bow to the wreath.

Green knit wreath:

1. Cut a knit scarf into a strip that is twice as wide as your wire wreath form and long enough to reach all the way around the face of the form.

2. Wrap the strip of cut scarf around the 12-inch wreath form. Pull together the raw edges on the back side, then whipstitch using a needle and thread or florists wire to close and secure the scarf to the form.

3. Cut four small lengths of florists wire. Secure the wood bead wreath to the outside of the scarf wreath using the wire.

4. Paint five wood beads with crafts paint (we chose a berry color); let dry. Hot-glue the beads around the wreath.

5. Make a multi-ribbon bow (search online for a tutorial). Secure to the wreath with florists wire.

Tied ribbons wreath:

1. Cut ribbons in a variety of colors and patterns about 18 inches long.

2. Tie ribbons into bows around a 12-inch wire wreath ring, alternating colors and textures as you work your way around. Trim ribbon edges, as needed.

FROSTED SPRIGS

page 31

MATERIALS

- Washed wool fabric or felt: white, cream, beige, green, pink
- Scissors
- Wire snips
- Florists wire
- 12-inch MDF wood wreath form
- Printable Holly Leaf template (go to *BHG.com/MerryWreaths*)
- Fabric glue
- Cup with a 2-inch diameter
- Needle and thread
- Fiberfill
- Pink hair bow, tulle fabric, or ribbon

1. Make the white greenery: Cut long pieces of white, cream, and beige felt or wool into 1-inch-wide strips. Make snips (about ⅛ inch) on both sides of the strips, cutting toward the center, down the length of the fabric.

2. Using wire snips, cut florists wire into 9-inch lengths. Gently push one end of the wire through the center end of one strip of fabric. Bend over wire end to secure the fabric. Wrap the fabric around the wire until you reach the end of the wire; bend end to secure and cut off excess fabric.

3. Wrap the wire-fabric piece around the wreath form. Repeat with each piece of white, cream, and beige wool until the wreath form is completely covered.

4. Make the holly leaves: Print and cut out the Holly Leaf template. Fold a piece of green felt or wool in half, trace the template, and cut out so you have two identical pieces of wool per leaf. Repeat to make nine leaves total. Cut an 8-inch length of floral wire using wire snips. Place fabric glue along the middle and outside edge of one leaf pair. Set the wire in the center glue line, then sandwich the other leaf pair on top. Press to secure. Repeat with each leaf.

5. Make the berries: Cut nine 2-inch-diameter circles from pink felt or wool (we used a cup as a template). Use a needle and thread to create a running stitch on each circle, about ⅛ inch from the edge of the circle. Cinch the thread, leaving a small opening. Insert fiberfill until firmly stuffed. Pull and knot the thread to close.

6. Glue the leaves and berries in place, equidistant around the wreath. Glue a bow (or tulle fabric or ribbon tied into a bow) onto the wreath bottom.

ECLECTIC ORNAMENTS

pages 32-33

MATERIALS

- Papier-mâché ball ornament
- Washed wool fabric or felt
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Yarn in various colors and weights
- Velvet ribbon
- ¼-inch wood beads
- Needle and thread
- 1½-inch or 2-inch wood beads
- Acrylic paint
- Paintbrush
- Florists wire
- Wire snips
- ¾-inch or 1-inch copper coupling tube
- Knit sweater, scarf, or hat
- Round foam ball
- Ribbon in a color or pattern of your choosing

Pink ball ornament:

1. Starting at the center, hot-glue a piece of wool or felt around the center of a papier-mâché ball ornament. Hot-glue various pieces of yarn to the rest of the ornament until it's fully covered.

2. Tie a velvet ribbon into a bow and hot-glue to the top of the ornament.

3. Thread small wood beads onto yarn; tie, then hot-glue to the center of the ornament. Thread a second set of beads; tie, then hot-glue to the top of the ornament as a hanger.

Tassel ornament:

1. Paint large wood beads with acrylic paint. Let dry.

2. Cut a variety of yarn or strips of velvet ribbon into 12-inch lengths. Cut a piece of florists wire (about 12 inches) using wire snips. Fold the florists wire in half at the center of the yarn bundle and twist to snugly form a yarn tassel.

3. Slide a copper coupling tube onto the florists wire and top inch of the tassel. Slide a painted bead onto the florists wire to rest on top of the coupling tube. Twist the florists wire into a loop on top of the bead; cut off excess wire. Hang ornament from ribbon or yarn.

Green knit ornament:

1. Wrap a scrap piece of knit sweater, scarf, or hat onto a round foam ball, hot-gluing as you go.

2. Tie cut pieces of yarn into small bows. Hot-glue around the ornament at equal distances.

3. Twist a length of florists wire into a loop to form a hanger. Hot-glue into the top of the foam ball. Tie a ribbon into a large bow; hot-glue to the top of the ornament near the hanger. Hang ornament from a ribbon.

Glitter & Gold?

writer MARA BOO *photographer* ADAM ALBRIGHT

Flirty, feminine, and fun. The winsome holiday decorations in one family's home showcase a creative mom's urge to delight her growing daughters.

Not everyone repaints their front door

a new color every year as part of their Christmas decorating. But then, not everyone is Stephanie Hanna. "My friends tease me that I'm a little over the top," she laughs, "but I just want to make everything magic."

From buying a snow-making machine for her daughters McKenzie, 14, and Maven, 9, to enjoy flurries on their Florida lawn—"I forgot to tell our neighbors, and they all ran outside thinking it was the real deal!"—to the annual holiday movie night she and husband Rusty host on a giant blow-up screen in their backyard, Stephanie wholeheartedly embraces the season. "I really try to lean into the fun of Christmas," she says, "Our girls are growing up fast and I see how fleeting these years are."

Leaning in Stephanie-style means challenging herself to transform her family's home each year with a new holiday color palette and decorating theme, which she shares with legions of followers on Instagram @stephaniehannahome. "One year everything was neutral and gold and elegant; the next year, I turned the house into a chocolate brown and cream woodland," she says. "It helps to have a patient husband and a storage unit!"

ART EXHIBITION Bright acrylic tags from Chalk Designs by Me adorn soft knit stockings on the mantel, *above*. Stephanie purchased a retro Santa Claus image on Etsy and uploaded it to the family's Samsung Frame TV. For the sparkly trees, she covered inexpensive kraft paper cones with tinsel fringe and crowned them with velvet ribbon bows. "Buy door curtains, not tinsel strands," Stephanie recommends.

STANDING OVATION The Hannas' creativity reveals itself in the DIY arch at their front entry, *opposite*. Stephanie and Rusty set it up in August to decorate for Halloween then swap pumpkins for Christmas decorations in November. The life-size nutcrackers get repainted each year to match the front door.

SITTING PRETTY Maven and pup Piper cozy up in front of the living room fireplace, *above*. The white furnishings provide a perfect blank slate to Stephanie's many holiday color palettes over the years. She dressed up the garland with fairy lights, golden metallic stars, and an oversize bow handmade from upholstery foam, pink taffeta, and hot glue. "The hot-glue gun is my best friend," she says. "I was a clothing designer in a past life 20 years ago and now I hate using a sewing machine!"

FAMILY FIRST Christmas decorating is a family affair for Stephanie, Rusty, and their daughters Maven (left) and McKenzie (right), *above*. "The girls have helped me decorate since they were little," Stephanie says, "and Rusty is always along for the ride."

Zip ties secure these ornaments into clusters on the bannister.

This year, the Hanna home is whimsically decorated in playful pink. You'll find bows everywhere, adorning Christmas trees (all six of them!), embellishing stockings, and even looping around the handle of a favorite charcuterie board. "The holidays go quickly," Stephanie says, "but when you create warm, inviting spaces that are filled with little touches for you and your family and friends to notice, it gives everyone a reason to slow down, be present, and enjoy themselves even more. That's magical in itself." ❄

LIGHT HOUSE The Christmas tree, *opposite*, is bedecked with 50 jewel-tone bows Stephanie made from velvet ribbon, interspersed with glowing orbs. "There's something about Christmas lights that bring comfort, which is why so many things in my house glow," she says. "The weather here isn't very cold, so I overdo it with lights inside to make it feel like we're in a different season." Ornaments are chosen by her girls. Many are from Anthropologie; some are glass, which Stephanie favors over plastic. She's also a firm believer in tree collars. "Tree skirts are the worst invention ever," she says. "They trap dust and dog hair." A framed mirror from Lulu and Georgia leans against the wall, doubling the tree's glow.

I love decorating to make people feel good, especially my family. That's a big part of the appeal for me.
—HOMEOWNER STEPHANIE HANNA

SECRET SANTAS A kitchen cupboard opens to reveal an eclectic collection of Santa mugs gathered over the years, *right*. "I'm not a thrifter and I don't antique," Stephanie says, "but I do love a good shopping trip to HomeGoods, Target, and Anthropologie." Displayed over her kitchen coffee station, the collection even includes a pair of diminutive mugs for their Elf on the Shelf friends, Chippy and Chester. And, yes, Stephanie uses all of the mugs. "I never put things out just for looks," she says.

TAKE A SEAT Stephanie layers a festive runner over a plain cotton tablecloth then arranges flowers, candles, beverages, and treats in matching hues on the dining room table, *above*. Faux greenery drapes along the windows. "I'd love to have fresh garlands, but the Florida heat would dry them out right away," she says.

TREAT BOARD To elevate a holiday sweets display, *right*, Stephanie covers a board with shredded coconut, mini marshmallows, and dollops of meringue, then tops it with festive cookies. These ones are by Royally Iced, a small bakery whose owner takes inspiration from Stephanie's annual Christmas decor. Note the disco ball snowman cookie—a mini version of the disco ball snowman in her office.

MISS MATCHED Stephanie's office transforms into a workshop, thanks to the workbench-style desk Rusty made. Stephanie built the sparkly snowman by drilling holes through a trio of disco balls and inserting a PVC pipe to steady them. She threaded ornaments through fishing line to make the tree's colorful garland then added a large bow as a topper.

"Most people approach the holidays with a to-do list they're just trying to check off. There's a lot of stress in that and very little joy. Try to take the opposite approach and just have fun with it. You might be surprised!"

—STEPHANIE HANNA

MOUNTED SUSPENSE
Stephanie hangs an Advent calendar from garland draped over a piece of art, *right*. Each mini house (from Amazon) is decorated by Stephanie and holds a clue that sends the girls on a search for treasures—sometimes for pieces of candy; one time plane tickets for a holiday trip to New York.

SMALL WONDER The corner in Maven's room manages just enough space for a slender Christmas tree, *above*. She loves candy, so her tree is filled with sweets-inspired ornaments. A handmade felted poodle from Anthropologie sits atop.

MAGIC DREAMS Maven's room gets a dose of holiday cheer, *right*. Wallpaper (from Opal+Olive) backs a Santa head and "You Are Magic" neon sign. A holiday pillow rests against Santa-print sheets from Pottery Barn Kids. The shelf above her desk holds books special to the season.

Eye Candy Entry

The swoon-worthy arch on the Hanna home, *above*, will take a good chunk of time to create, but the final result is awe-worthy. Stephanie shares how to craft one of your own.

1.
MAKE A BASE

Rusty used PVC pipes to build the structure of the arch, then wrapped tubes of chicken wire around it, *right*.

2.
ADD GARLAND

The couple wound 19 faux garland strands around the arch, affixing them securely to the chicken wire using zip ties. They repeated the process with 17 strands of white lights.

3.
BRING IN BULBS

Stephanie gathered 200 ornaments into small clusters with zip ties then nestled each cluster into the garlands.

4.
TOP WITH A BOW

Stephanie used high-density polyurethane foam (available at crafts stores) to make the bow, cinched the center into shape with zip ties, and covered the foam with taffeta fabric using hot glue.

A Claus for Celebration

For one family of four, whose Indiana home is far from cookie-cutter, Christmas is still classic—just curated, cozy, and completely their own.

writer **ELLA SCHULTE** *photographer* **AUSTIN DAY** *stylist* **LAUREN DAY**

FROM TREE TO TREATS The cozy glow of the Christmas tree is enjoyed from all angles near the central hub in Brit Arnesen's home, *above*. An elongated keyhole-shaped partial wall creates an open flow between the main living spaces, while still offering a sense of separation—just as Brit and her husband, Derek, envisioned during the year they spent on the whole-home renovation. Inspired by an Art Deco hotel Brit spotted online, the addition offers a touch of old-world elegance.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY GARY THOMPSON

HEARTHSIDE RETREAT A newly added mantel sets the stage for holiday decorating—ideal for draping garlands or hanging stockings with care. Oversize chairs that flank the fireplace make the whole room feel wrapped in warmth.

A cozy Christmas calls for evening gatherings around the fireplace with mood lighting. Lamps of various sizes help cast a soft, subtle glow.

Brit painted stripes in Valspar Butcher Block (now discontinued; try their Café Miel) and Benjamin Moore Candle Light.

CURVED EDGES

Brit enjoys the intimate allure of the den, located off the dining room and adjoining kitchen. "There were a few arches original to the home, but they were removed with the rest of the kitchen," Brit says. "All the archways you see at this point I added myself for architectural interest."

For Brit and Derek Arnesen,

December 25 looks a lot like her Instagram @britdotdesign—whimsical, warm, and full of holiday charm. Behind the scenes, the couple's love for family traditions runs deep, and the spirit of the season fills every gold-gilded, garland-draped corner of their Indiana home. Think café curtains clad in plaid in the kitchen and a tinsel-trimmed tree in the living room.

But Christmas charisma didn't always abound. The couple spent a year transforming the home's basic bones (which had been foreclosed on and uninhabited for five years) into a place with character and class. They originally intended it as a quick flip but decided to stay put for their children, Theo and Sadie.

Now, the home is Brit's personal palette playground—especially during the holidays. On Black Friday, while many shop, the Arnesens decorate the tree, hang stockings, and fill their home with festive greens. "Slowly but surely, my love for antiques and vintage has taken over," she says. "I think my style could be described as vintage meets modern, whimsical, and Art Deco-inspired."

Much like Brit's career as an interior stylist and content creator, the home reflects an artistic journey unto itself—creative, evolving, and fueled by passion throughout every season. "When I first made my Instagram handle, the name was just a

FESTIVE FACADE The 1960s ranch, *top*, is nestled in a charming neighborhood and adorned with fresh garlands that welcome family inside. "The house was so long and basic before, with no real architectural interest or character," Brit says. They added the mono-slant porch overhang to make the house look more midcentury.

STEP INSIDE By the entry, *above left*, a vintage portrait hangs from a velvet ribbon above a CB2 console table and Target stools.

ANTIQUE TUNES A 1930s GE tube radio in the den, *above right*, echoes Brit's verve for vintage style—and it still tunes into a few AM stations.

placeholder," Brit says. She figured she would come up with something better, but the momentum picked up and the name stuck. Her followers see the intention behind the screen, and Brit's attention to detail shines in each DIY project finished and string of garland strung.

"We may outgrow this house one day, but the Christmas traditions we've built will stay with us forever," Brit says. "When Theo and Sadie grow up, we want them to look back on the little things we do together. While they might not seem like a big deal now, we hope they remember those moments, loving them as much as Derek and I do." ❋

BAKE CENTRAL Brit installed open shelves in her mostly white kitchen, *left*, where she makes German butterscotch cookies for the holidays with help from daughter Sadie, son Theo, and Ferdinand, a Boston terrier. An island end panel reflects Brit's on-again, off-again romance with pink.

BOLD STYLE Theo's bedroom, *opposite*, features ample storage cleverly disguised by custom paneling, which was inspired by the Mayan Revival architecture of the John Sowden House in Los Angeles. "It still has an Art Deco flair, but it's a bit more masculine," Brit says. A mini tree, personalized stocking, and simple garland adorn the space. "Both Theo and Sadie have their own Christmas trees in their rooms filled with ornaments they've collected," she says. "It brings a bit of festive fun to their personal spaces and is something they look forward to every year."

EMBRACE TIMELESS STYLE

Despite the ever-changing shift in seasons, Brit Arnesen suggests calling on these staples year after year.

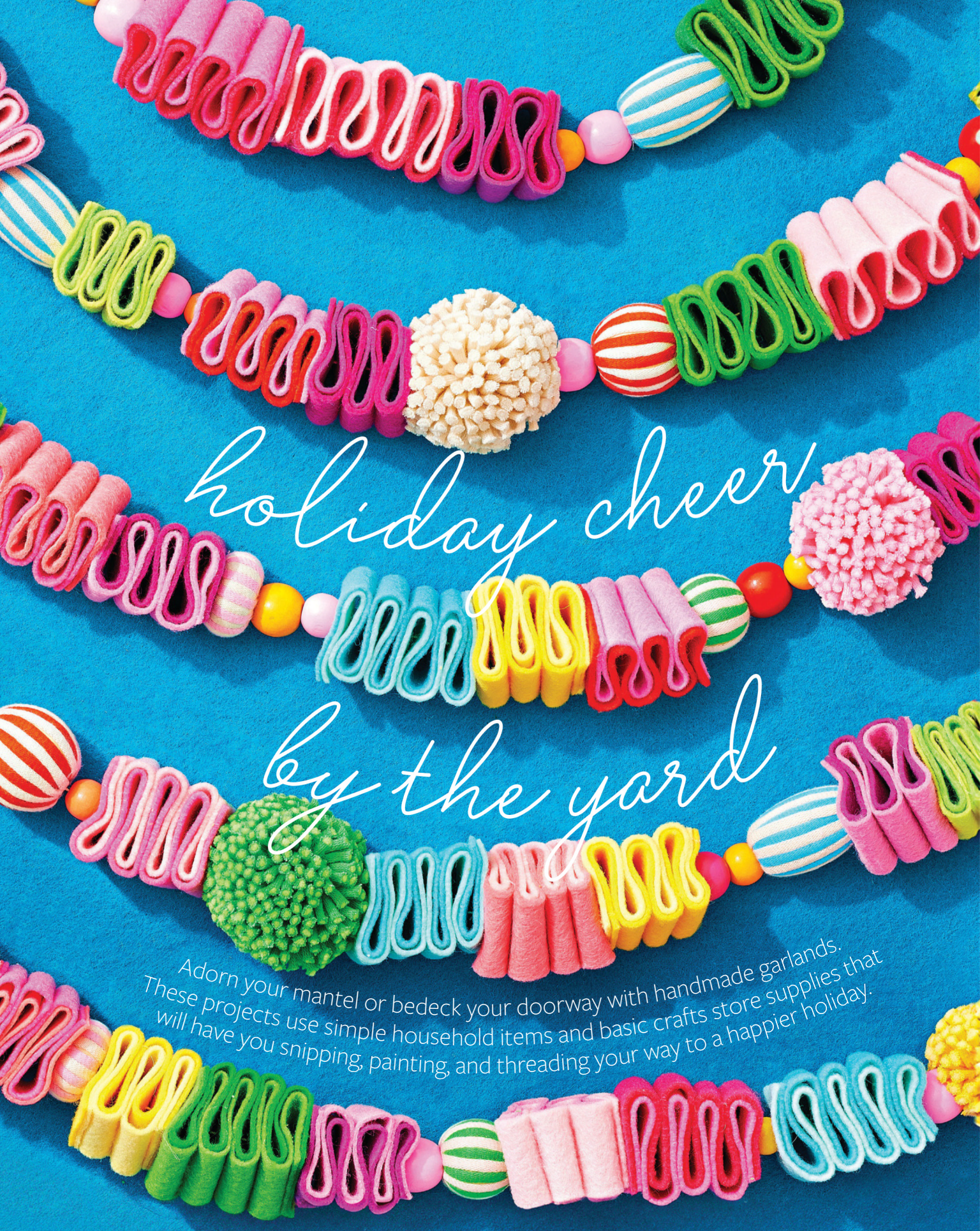
1.
REBOOT HUES Seasonal decor doesn't need to include traditional reds and greens. Stick to colors that match pieces you already own. Brit chooses soft blushes, warm neutrals, and sage greens for her festive palette.

2.
SWAP USUALS Brit likes to display candleholders year-round but switches out the white or neutral tapers with green during the holidays.

3.
GO FAUX Real greenery can make a space feel fresh and inviting, but if you don't like the mess, opt for faux garlands and fill them in with fresh clippings. "My mom has a beautiful pine tree in her yard," Brit says. "I like to cut some branches to add to my faux greenery."

4.
PERSONALIZE IT If you're drawn to a non-holiday trend, include it in your winter decor. "I love the look of art hanging from a velvet ribbon, so I incorporate it into my Christmas decor too," Brit says.

“
I just love transforming things
I’m tired of into something new.
–HOMEOWNER BRIT ARNESEN
”



holiday cheer by the yard

Adorn your mantel or bedeck your doorway with handmade garlands. These projects use simple household items and basic crafts store supplies that will have you snipping, painting, and threading your way to a happier holiday.

writers **KATHY BARNES & ELLA FIELD** *photographer* **BRIE GOLDMAN**
producer **KIM HUTCHISON** *stylist* **JESSICA THOMAS**

Instructions begin on *page 54*.

FELT RIBBON CANDY

This garland, *opposite*, is as pretty (and tempting) as those classic ribbon candies in Grandma's cut-crystal dish. A double layer of folded felt creates the striped look of the original. Beads—some painted and others wrapped with yarn—look like gumballs and peppermints.

PAPER BAG POINSETTIAS

Grocery sacks are the ideal weight to make boughs of poinsettia-inspired flowers and holly leaves, *above*. Painted flower shapes get seasonal bling with metallic cardstock centers. Add shimmery highlights on the leaves with a golden paint pen.

PAPER CUP BELLS

Plain snack cups are the starting point for this joyful jingle bell garland, *above, top*. Each receives a unique color mix from layers of tissue paper decoupaged onto the cup. A pom-pom clapper hangs from a wire, while felt bows top each shape.

COFFEE FILTER FLAKES

Ensure that you have Christmas snow every year with a garland made from paper coffee filters, *above, bottom*. These are sure to perk up those short December days. Snip the edges with pinking shears and add a pom-pom in the center for a surprise touch of color.

TIERED YARN TASSELS

The happy tassels, *above*, will dress up your tree with playful fringed fibers. The swingy look is created by three tassels connected with a dab of glue. Use different colors for an ombré effect.

MIXED MATERIALS

There's a little something for everyone in this exuberant mix of color, material, and construction, *opposite*. This is the kind of garland you'll love to make with friends or your kids, where everyone can try their hands at a new craft.

FELT RIBBON CANDY

page 50

MATERIALS

- Assorted 9x12-inch felt sheets
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Assorted worsted weight yarn
- Pom-pom maker
- Plastic yarn needle
- Assorted macramé beads
- Cotton thread
- Embroidery needle
- Assorted painted wood beads

1. To make the felt ribbon candy pieces: Cut two 1x12-inch strips of felt in different colors; stack the strips. Fold about 1 inch of one end of each strip onto itself to create the first fold; hot-glue in place. Repeat, folding back and forth (accordion-style) until the candy shape is formed. Repeat to make your desired number of pieces (we used 24 for a 5-foot-long garland).

2. To make the pom-poms: Use assorted yarn and the pom-pom maker's package instructions. (We made five.)

3. To make peppermint beads: Thread the yarn needle with two 3-foot strands of yarn in different colors. Insert the needle through the hole of a macramé bead and pull the yarn through until the ends are sitting inside the bead; hot-glue the ends to the inside of the bead. Keeping the two colors of yarn parallel, lay the yarn flat against the bead. Thread the needle through the bead again and continue wrapping the yarn around the bead this way until the entire surface is covered in alternating stripes, *below.* Cut excess yarn and tuck the ends into the bead's hole; hot-glue.

Repeat with assorted bead sizes and colors (we used seven).

4. Cut a length of thread to desired garland length (ours is about 5 feet) and thread through the embroidery needle; knot one end into a loop. Using the needle, string garland pieces together in whatever order you like. Once thread is full, knot the other end into a loop for hanging.

PAPER BAG POINSETTIAS

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MATERIALS

- 4 to 5 paper grocery sacks
- Assorted red, pink, and green crafts paint
- Paintbrush
- Printable Petal and Leaf templates (go to *BHG.com/HolidayGarland*)
- 3D adhesive foam dots
- 1-inch scallop circle punch
- Metallic cardstock
- Wrapped florists wire
- Metallic paint pen
- 1-inch circle punch

1. To create the flowers and leaves: Deconstruct grocery sacks, cutting as needed, to make flat sheets of paper. On a prepared work surface, paint three bags in pinks and reds and two bags in assorted greens; let dry.

2. Print and cut out the templates. Trace and cut the large and small petal templates onto the pink and red bags until you have your desired number of flowers (we used five large and five small flowers for a 5-foot-long garland). Fold petals as indicated in the template. Save paper scraps.

3. Place both pieces of one flower on top of each other, stacking them so the petals alternate. Place an adhesive dot in the center between the pieces to secure.

4. Punch a scalloped circle out of cardstock and adhere to the center of the flower with an adhesive dot.

5. Cut a 5-inch length of florists wire and glue to the back of the flower, like a stem.

6. Repeat steps 3–5 to make the desired number of flowers.

7. Trace and cut the leaf template onto the green bags until you have your desired number of leaves (we used 33). Cut a few 1x12-inch strips of green to set aside for step 10. Add veins to leaves with a paint pen.

8. Cut a 5-inch length of florists wire for each leaf and glue to the back.

9. Punch circles out of the pink and red paper scraps to create berries. Use adhesive dots to glue berries on top of some leaves.

10. To create a pine sprig: With a 1x12-inch strip of green, cut a fringe on one of the long sides of the strip. Glue one of the short ends to the top of a length of florists wire. Wrap the paper strip around the florists wire in a spiral fashion until the paper is wrapped around the wire; glue as you wrap and at the end to secure.

11. Cut your desired length of wire for garland (ours was 5 feet). Wrap and twist the leaves and flowers around the garland wire. Twist wire to create loops at each end for hanging.

PAPER CUP BELLS

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MATERIALS

- Assorted tissue paper
- Paper cups
- Decoupage medium
- Paintbrush
- Fabric-wrapped florists wire
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Small pom-poms
- 1-inch circle punch
- Cardstock
- Felt sheets
- Gold cording

1. Cut tissue paper into various strips and circles.

2. Brush a section of a paper cup with decoupage medium; add pieces of tissue paper and decoupage over the tissue paper. Repeat until your cup, which will become the bell, is covered; let dry.

3. Cut a 2-inch length of florists wire. Hot-glue one end of the wire to the center of a pom-pom.

4. Poke a hole through the top center of the bell and slide other end

of wire through the hole. Bend wire end and hot-glue to the top of the bell.

5. Punch a 1-inch circle out of cardstock; glue to the top of the bell to cover the wire. Carefully pierce two holes with scissors, one on either side of the circle, for hanging. Repeat steps 1–5 until you've made a desired number of bells (we made 10).

6. To make the bow on top: Cut two ½x6-inch strips of felt and one ½x1½-inch strip of felt.

7. On one of the longer strips, fold the ends so they meet at the center, creating the top of the bow shape, *opposite*; hot-glue in place. Fold the other long strip into a V shape and hot-glue the point of the V to the back side of the bow top.

8. Wrap the small piece of felt around the center of the bow; hot-glue the ends together and to the back of the bow. Repeat steps 6–8 for one bow per bell.

9. Cut cording to desired garland length (ours was 5 feet). String the cording through the holes of each bell. Once strung, hot-glue felt bows to the top of each bell.

COFFEE FILTER FLAKES

page 52

MATERIALS

- Cone coffee filters
- Printable Coffee Filter Star template (go to *BHG.com/HolidayGarland*)
- Pinking shears
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- 2-millimeter cotton yarn
- Pom-poms

1. Fold eight coffee filters in half lengthwise. Print template, then trace and cut template onto filters using pinking shears.

2. Unfold each filter. Apply a line of hot glue down the fold seam of one filter and stack another on top to glue together. Repeat until four are glued together. Repeat again so you have another stack of four. Each stack will be one half of a snowflake.

3. Cut cotton yarn to desired garland length (ours was 6 feet). On half a snowflake, add a line of hot glue along the center folded seam of one of the points, place yarn on top, then add the other half of the snowflake on top, lining up the points and sandwiching the yarn; hot-glue as needed.

4. Open both halves of the snowflake and glue its ends together at the point.

5. Repeat steps 1–4, leaving about 3 to 4 inches between each snowflake, until the garland is full (we made eight snowflakes). Hot-glue pom-poms to the centers, and tie loops on the yarn's ends for hanging.

TIERED YARN TASSELS

page 52

MATERIALS

- Assorted yarns
- 2x3-inch piece of cardboard
- Tapestry needle
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Silver cording

1. Wrap yarn around a piece of cardboard longways about 20 to 30 times; cut yarn from the skein.

2. Cut a 5- to 6-inch length of yarn. Use a tapestry needle to slide the length of yarn underneath the yarn on the cardboard.

3. Slip the yarn off the cardboard and tie the short length of yarn into a double knot around the top of the yarn bundle. Incorporate the tails of the knot into the bundle.

4. Cut another 5- to 6-inch length of yarn and wrap it around the yarn bundle about ½ inch from the top; tie in a double knot to secure.

5. Cut the loops at the bottom of the yarn bundle to create the tassel fringe; comb and trim as needed.

6. Repeat steps 1–5 two more times.

7. Place one tassel on top of another so the bottom tassel sits in the center of the other tassel's fringe; hot-glue to secure. Repeat, adding the remaining tassel to the stack.

8. Repeat steps 1–7 to make your desired number of tassels (we made 10).

9. Cut cording to desired garland length (ours was 3 feet) and thread through a tapestry needle. String cording through the tassel tops and tie loops on each end to hang.

MIXED MATERIALS

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MATERIALS

- Assorted worsted weight yarn
- Pom-pom maker
- Hexagon, Sphere, and Cone templates (go to *BHG.com/HolidayGarland*)
- Metallic cardstock
- Bone folder
- Permanent glue stick
- Assorted 1- to 1½-inch circle punches
- Cotton thread
- Embroidery needle

- Golden geometric wooden beads
- 6-millimeter wooden beads painted golden and silver
- Assorted colorful jingle bells

1. To make the pom-poms: Use assorted yarn and the pom-pom maker's package instructions (we made 14).

2. To make the accordion hexagons: Print the template; trace and cut 12 pieces of the hexagon template onto metallic cardstock. Fold each piece with a bone folder as indicated on the template. With folded edges aligned, glue one half of a hexagon to another half. Continue to glue the hexagon halves in this manner until they're all glued together. Glue the opposite ends together to complete the 3D shape—keep a small gap in the center for stringing. Repeat for desired number of hexagons (we made four).

3. To make accordion spheres: Punch four circles out of metallic cardstock; fold in half with a bone folder. Use the same method as the hexagons to create spheres. Repeat to make desired number of spheres (we made two).

4. To make cones: Trace and cut cone template onto metallic cardstock; fold with a bone folder as indicated. Overlap the ends of the cardstock piece to create a cone and secure with the glue stick. Repeat to make desired number of cones (we made 12).

5. Thread cotton thread through an embroidery needle and string garland elements, beads, and bells onto thread. When stringing the cones, use a 6-millimeter bead in between cones as spacers. Continue to add to the garland until you reach your desired garland length (ours was 5 feet). Cut the thread from the spool and tie the ends of the thread into loops for hanging.

Wrapped IN CHEER

For this homeowner and decorator, the magic of Christmas lives in the details—layers of ribbon, shimmering satin bows, and a twinkling tree in every room.

writer **KELSEY LEPPARD** *photographer* **ADAM ALBRIGHT**

MAGIC BEGINNINGS This West Virginia home, *opposite*, has been Jennifer and Josh Hutzler's holiday haven for nearly 23 years. "I was planning our wedding while he was building our house," says Jennifer. "We moved in just a couple months after we got married." Today, the exterior sets a festive tone with wreaths in every window and oversize nutcrackers and frosted trees on the front porch.

RADIANT REDS Jennifer's signature decorating style includes rich textures, big ornaments, and wired ribbon—her go-to material for adding volume and dimension. The tree in her entry, *this photo*, dazzles with layers of ornaments in all shapes and finishes, flocked branches, and a dramatic topper bursting with berries and bows. "I stick to a color theme across the house, but no two trees are the same," she says.

STOCKING STYLE
Four faux fur stockings topped with red bows bring softness and cheer to the stone fireplace. Jennifer finishes the look with flocked greenery, pinecones, and a mix of glimmering red ornaments.

> From the moment you walk into my home, I want you to feel the warmth and joy of the season.
>
> –HOMEOWNER JENNIFER HUTZLER

Growing up across the street

from a Christmas tree farm was just the beginning of professional tree decorator Jennifer Hutzler's lifelong love of the holiday season. Her family moved in a few weeks before Christmas, so that first year was simple. "We just had a tree," she recalls. "But the next year, my mom went all out. I'll never forget it." The memory stuck—and so did the magic.

Jennifer, who shares her styling on Instagram @the.sugarplum.palace, transforms her West Virginia home into a holiday wonderland each year beginning on November 1. The decor stays up through January 6, when the family celebrates Little Christmas, a nod to her Italian roots and one of the many beloved traditions that fill the season with meaning.

With help from daughters Isabella and Bianca, Jennifer ensures every corner of the Hutzler home receives Christmas cheer. "Even the laundry room gets a wreath," she says.

When her family requested a red-and-white palette this year, Jennifer was up to the challenge. "It's my husband's favorite color," she says. "I hadn't used red in years, and now I don't know why I waited so long." Blending twinkle lights, plenty of flocked garland, and rich textures—think faux fur, velvet, and satin—with playful, maximalist touches, Jennifer's signature style shines bright throughout the home, especially across her nine Christmas trees. "I even name each of my trees according to their personality," she says.

Though united by color, each tree tells its own story—some sparkle with feathers and faux snow, while others are filled with colorful baubles and handmade ornaments crafted by her daughters. "I always think more is better," Jennifer says. From the glow of the fireplace to the scent of fresh poinsettias, every room is decked with intention and joy. "It's all about making it magical for my family," she says. "It's just what I love to do."

SEASONAL STAIRS Swags of lighted garland looped with pinecones, golden jingle bells, and red bows drape the staircase, *above*. "There's just something about that garland that makes it so cozy and festive," says Jennifer.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS From handmade ornaments to baking days in the kitchen, every holiday moment is a family memory in the making for the Hutzlers, *left*. Jennifer, her husband, Josh, daughters Isabella and Bianca, and their pup Maya all play a part in bringing the season to life.

DASH OF DECOR To keep the kitchen both festive and functional, Jennifer layers holiday touches over the action, *above*. A wreath on the oven hood and garland in the pendant lights leaves plenty of room for baking, while a sleigh of poinsettias adds a pop of color to the island without crowding the workspace.

SWEET TREATS The colorful cupcakes, *below*, were made by Jennifer's niece, a professional chef. "She's so talented," Jennifer says. The family also enjoys a full spread of traditional Italian desserts on Christmas—like cannoli, tiramisu, and their favorite ricotta cheese cookies, which Jennifer calls "pillows of heaven" because they are "so light and airy and very tasty."

CHEERFUL CHAIR Jennifer often zhuzhes up store-bought wreaths with custom touches. This frosted version, *above*, trimmed with snowy berries and a classic red velvet bow, brings flair to the back of each kitchen stool.

ALL SET Flanked by two Christmas trees, this year's dining table, *opposite*, features white dishware and a poinsettia napkin ring to match the trees primped with the same flower. "I absolutely love doing tablescapes," says Jennifer. "It's one of my favorite ways to decorate."

MERRILY MINIMAL
Jennifer brings cheer to her bedroom with a few simple swaps. “I switch out throw pillows, toss a blanket at the end of the bed, and add a tree,” she says. This year’s tree, dressed in rich velvet bows and golden poinsettias, complements a pine garland draped over the headboard and a wreath on the wall—proof that even subtle touches can transform a space.

“My mom always said there should be a little bit of Christmas in every room, and that always stuck with me.”

–JENNIFER HUTZLER

TREE WITH A VIEW In the sunroom, *above*, a flocked Christmas tree draped in crimson florals and snowy textures takes center stage. Wrapped presents beneath the tree echo the room’s rich palette in crisp white paper and oversized red ribbon bows.

Trim a Tree Like a Pro

Homeowner and Christmas tree decorator Jennifer Hutzler shares her favorite tricks for creating a full, festive look.

BUILD IN LAYERS

“For a pre-lit tree, I start with ribbon. For an unlit one, lights come first—always twinkle lights,” she says. “Then I layer in ribbon strips, stems and sprays, and ornaments—in that order.”

BUNDLE & TUCK

Jennifer’s ornament clusters begin with a long strip of ribbon knotted at one end. Slide on as many ornaments in various sizes that will fit, and tie off the other end. Repeat the process, then nestle each cluster into the branches. “They fill in the tree beautifully and store easily for next year,” Jennifer says. (Check out her Instagram for a tutorial on this technique.)

LET SPRAYS LEAD

“Most people think ornaments are the main event, but for me, it’s ribbon and stems,” Jennifer says. “That’s what gives a tree that lush, full look.”

FINISH WITH A STATEMENT

Top your tree with something unexpected, like a reindeer or a jingle bell. “I always include one unique statement piece to really bring the tree to life,” she says. A styled tree skirt and wrapped gifts complete the look.

Evergreen

MEMORIES

When a pro party planner's child has a birthday that falls just before Christmas, she must deck the halls! Consider this your invite to a tree-rifically themed holiday party that celebrates the season—and a December-born kid.

writer **BRIANNE SANCHEZ** *photographer* **JULIA LYNN** *stylist* **EMILY ELVERU**

LAST-DITCH DESSERT

When a custom cake didn't arrive, Kelsey Klos quickly ordered a plain store-bought cake and adorned it with a real tree topper. Keeping it simple helped everything else pop, including the acrylic cake stand filled with vintage ornaments, rainbow wreath wall, and gumdrop tree of pickles. "Party planning, to me, means being a problem solver," Kelsey says. "This party wasn't about the cake. There were so many other things that could shine."

INSPIRED INVITE Custom invitations from Itsy Bitsy Parties, *opposite,* turned 9-year-old Denver's past party themes into illustrated ornaments. It was all on track for her Christmas pickle-meets-tree party, which—birthday or not—is full of ideas to get your holiday guests in the spirit.

FIT FOR A FEAST

The dining room table is dressed in a green tablecloth to resemble the color of a Christmas tree. Place settings were designed to look like ornaments with a star-shaped treat board at the head.

> “No color is left behind in this house. We are rainbows for days. I think it brings the party to life.”
>
> —PARTY HOST KELSEY KLOS

Plan a party around a pickle ornament?

Given the occasion, Kelsey Klos couldn't resist. Her gherkin-loving eldest, Denver, was turning nine. Plus, their family participates in the pickle ornament tradition every year: Whoever discovers its hiding spot on the tree gets to open the first present.

A pickle-meets-Christmas-tree theme seemed perfect, but before committing, the House of Fete cofounder (on Instagram @house.of.fete and @kelseyklos) sought buy-in from the birthday girl. She presented mood boards for two celebration concepts, including activity ideas and outfit inspiration. "I can picture all the cool things that would happen," Kelsey says. "But if I can give her a visual too, it's easier for her to choose."

Her December-born daughter opted for "A Bepickled Christmas" over Peter Pan. "We love the magic of Christmas, so incorporating it into Denver's birthday has been really fun over the years," Kelsey says.

Each part of the celebration centered around the Christmas tree theme. Denver's gaggle of guests filled take-home bags with hot chocolate and

PLANNING PRO Kelsey chooses a party theme as much as six months in advance and collects accessories that fit the theme—often on sale—whenever she spots them. One example: these hair ribbon barrettes, which Kelsey scooped from her daughters' collection to adorn the wreaths on the wall, *above*.

IN A PICKLE To play up birthday girl Denver's favorite food, Kelsey peppered pickles throughout the decor and snacks. The tags on these take-home ornaments, *left*, include punny messages like "You're a Big Dill."

> One of my specialties is picking the right vendors for a particular party. I start by making a slide presentation to help keep everything cohesive.
>
> —KELSEY KLOS

fixings from the hutch, which was turned into the "Tannenbaum Towne Center," and played Pass the Parcel, an unwrapping game. But pickles got a special spot too: Dangling as decor on two trees in the dining area, the sparkly oblong ornaments doubled as party favors. "How special that these girls now get to search for a pickle every Christmas?" Kelsey says.

As a party planning pro, Kelsey frequently collaborates with a variety of vendors who turn her creative visions into one-of-a-kind invitations, backdrops, and place mats. This time, she incorporated custom watercolor artwork by Cami Monet alongside her whimsical collection of bottle-brush trees. "I love having parties at home," Kelsey says. "Everything's at my fingertips." You could say this one turned out to be dill-lightful.

TREAT PLATE A stack of wreath-shaped mint chocolate macaron sandwiches from Soirée Macarons satisfies party guests with a sweet tooth, *above left*.

PERFECTLY PLACED Kelsey's company, House of Fete, developed a way to elevate simple paper plates, *above*. "I layered artwork in the shape of an ornament onto a plate, filled it with some confetti, and topped it with an acrylic round," she says. "You can eat off this custom-made plate without damaging what's underneath, and the acrylic round is washable."

PARTY ELVES

Shop from some of Kelsey Klos's fave small businesses and artisans.

- INVITATION, TAGS, AND RIBBONS
  Itsy Bitsy Parties,
  Instagram: @itsybitsypartieskc
- WATERCOLOR ART AND PRODUCTS
  Cami Monet,
  camimonet.com
- VELVET BOXES AND GLASS TREES
  Shop Sweet Lulu,
  shopsweetlulu.com
- PICKLE ORNAMENTS
  Old World Christmas,
  oldworldchristmas.com
- FRINGE TREE
  Glam Fete,
  Instagram: @glamfete
- MACARONS
  Soirée Macarons,
  soireemacarons.com
- COOKIES
  Royally Iced Sweets,
  Instagram: @royallyiced
- PARTY HATS
  Little Blue Olive,
  Instagram: @littleblueolive;
- FRAMED ARTWORK
  Nysha Paloma Lilly,
  Instagram: @nyshalilly
- NAPKINS
  Suburban Soiree x Kelsey Klos,
  Instagram: @suburban_soiree
- PRESENT TAGS
  Chalk Designs by Me,
  chalkdesignsbyme.com

HOT COCOA CENTRAL

"We turned the hutch into a window-shopping moment," Kelsey says. The "Tannenbaum Towne Center" became a focal point, *left*, displaying Christmas dishes on the upper shelves while housing party favor supplies on the lower shelves. Each party guest picked out a tree-shaped party hat to wear and filled a bag with hot cocoa supplies to take home. Blue and green bottle-brush trees from Kelsey's collection form a faux forest with watercolor prints and tinsel mixed in for layers and texture.

STAR SISTERS

The girls play “pin the star on the tree” on a watercolor tapestry. Each player gets a paper star with their name on one side and double-stick tape on the other. Wearing a blindfold, they spin around and try to tack their star on top of the tree. Whoever is closest, wins!

FRINGE FEST Kelsey spruced up this blank corner with a space-saving fringe tree to serve as a charming backdrop for the drinks station, *above left*. You can achieve a similar style by cutting plastic tablecloths into strips or hanging crepe paper on cord. Decorate with garland and top with a paper star to resemble a real Christmas tree.

OH FIR CUTE Sisters Brennan, 5, Denver, 9, and Ray, 7, don custom-crafted party pins by Hip Hooray Studios, *top right*.

GREENERY TWO WAYS A simple veggie tray arranged as a wreath rises to the theme, *middle right*. (Kelsey used a wreath-shaped board, but you can replicate this with any tray shape.)

HANDHELD SNACK Steal this inverted tree idea, *above right*. Start by rolling a cone out of green paper, then glue a tiny gold star at the bottom. Fill the cone with popcorn, goldfish crackers, and a mini Babybel cheese "ornament." Denver thought to stick a pretzel rod in the center as a tree trunk.

timeless Tidings

Shades of red and green—plus plenty of Christmas cheer—shine through this young family's North Carolina home.

writer **EMILY CARREON** *photographer* **BRIE WILLIAMS** *stylist* **ANDREA NORDSTROM CAUGHEY**

CLASSIC STYLE
Season's greetings abound in Marissa Fidler's living room, which is filled with fresh poinsettias, red bows, and classic plaid touches. To make the space even more festive and inviting, Marissa uses fresh greenery found at her local hardware store or farmers market. "Nothing says Christmas to me like fresh-cut pine," she says.

Christmas isn't just a season

for Marissa Fidler. It's a way of life. With four kids under the age of six, the Fidlers' Christmas morning is nothing short of joyful chaos. But before the floor gets covered in wrapping paper, Marissa spends her time decking the halls of her Charlotte, North Carolina, home. "Growing up, my mom always made Christmas very big. My love of the holidays definitely comes from her," says Marissa, who shares DIY projects and decorating tips on Instagram @fidlinaroundhome.

Every year, Marissa starts with a traditional color scheme of bold reds and greens with golden accents, but then changes the look up with how she styles her garland, ribbons, and ornaments. "I like to pull inspiration from my favorite movies, old magazines, or even a store display," she says.

Beyond the festive decor, Marissa's family celebrates using both passed-down and brand-new traditions. In the days leading up to the holiday, they bake cookies, go ice skating, and write letters to Santa. "When I was younger, I would go caroling, so I've started that tradition with my oldest daughter," she says. It truly is the most wonderful time of the year. ✻

FAMILY JOY Marissa and her husband, Will, welcome the "beautiful chaos"—as she likes to call it—that comes at Christmastime with their four young children, Annabelle, William, Eleanor May, and Clara, *above*.

FLAIR INCLUDED During the season, Marissa swaps the curtains and rug in her dining room for these neutral options, *left*. They provide a blank base for her red and green finds.

HIGH-END DESIGN To make a Christmas tree appear fuller and give it a designer look, Marissa starts with ribbon, then layers in stems and picks before adding ornaments, *top*.

TABLE SPREAD Accordion trees and a pine bough garland set on a plaid runner create a simple yet impactful centerpiece on the family's dining table, *above*.

ALL SEASON Wreaths bedecked with red bows hint at the festive dinnerware inside the hutch, *top left*. Suction cups with hooks keep the wreaths secure on the windows.

COOKIES FOR SANTA Treats from local baker Icing on Lake Norman greet guests during get-togethers, *top right*.

BRIGHT BANISTER Marissa uses cord bundlers and adhesive hooks on the stair railing to hang garland damage-free, *above left*. Remote-control twinkly lights make it easy to turn the glow on and off.

MANTEL MAGIC The fireplace serves as a focal point in the Fidlers' living room, *above right*. While the mirror and sconces stay up year-round, Marissa adds greenery, a wreath, and red bows during the Christmas season.

POPS OF CHEER The kitchen, *opposite*, is the center of action for the Fidlers and visiting family and friends. Decor remains traditional yet out of the way. Greenery and big bows dress up the hanging lights, while small wreaths hang from a couple of cabinets and on the backs of stools. On the island, fresh pine accompanies ribbon-topped cowbells on a tray, which can be whisked away once food and treats come out.

“Christmas has always been magical to me. And now, I get to pass that magic down to my kids.”

–HOMEOWNER MARISSA FIDLER

HOME AWAY FROM HOME A decorated tree, festive bedding, and tray of goodies greet visitors in the guest bedroom, *opposite*. "I want everyone to feel the holiday spirit while they're here," says Marissa. "It's so magical."

OUTDOOR WONDERLAND Living in temperate Charlotte has its perks. The outdoor porch, *above*, is used year-round, providing more space to entertain and relax. The four children never forget to write their letters to Santa, which they place in a big Santa box next to the fireplace, *right*. Marissa delivers the letters to the post office to ensure they get to the North Pole.

OH SO marble-ous

Visions of candy-color swirls dance in stylist Jennifer DeCleene's head, so she swathes her home with papers and ribbons in the playful pattern for Christmas.

writer **AMY PANOS** *photographer* **NATHAN KIRKMAN** *producer* **JENNIFER BERNO DECLEENE**

ON THE TABLE

Homeowner and stylist Jennifer DeCleene loves pattern. To make an exuberant mix work, *this photo*, she sticks to a tight palette and varies the scale. The block print tablecloth is the smallest, the painterly napkin is the largest, and the raffia place mat falls somewhere in between. In the centerpiece, cedar sprigs winterize pink and white flowers. Christmas crackers wrapped in marbled paper fit the theme.

DINNER PLANS

Built-ins painted Farrow & Ball Breakfast Room Green are Jennifer's favorite part of her house, *opposite*. She rearranges them often (an occupational hazard), but right now they hold stacks of books plus marbled ceramic and glass trees for a light dusting of holiday decor.

Jennifer DeCleene is one of those people who likes their Christmas decor to flow

naturally out of their year-round decor, so when December hits, she always thinks pink. Oh, and mint green and aqua too—all the candy store colors she surrounds herself with full-time at the suburban Chicago home she shares with her husband, Mike, and two young sons.

"I'm not an earthy and organic girl," the longtime photo stylist says, in case her strawberry pink sofa didn't give it away. "I love color. I love lots of colors, lots of pattern." You'll see florals, stripes, and block prints at Jennifer's house, and for Christmas she adds one more motif: marbled patterns.

The dramatic swirls and veining show up on wreaths, the tree, sugar cookies, and peppermint bark—all in Jennifer's signature color palette. "A marble pattern is so versatile," she says. "The fluidity of it pulls everything together."

This mild obsession with marbling started with some handmade Florentine papers she brought home from a vacation in Italy. "That's the real, legit, centuries-old technique that I'm just trying to replicate," she says.

And replicate it she did. Using a $25 water-marbling kit from Michaels, the DIYer turned cheap balsa wood cutouts into a passel of pastel baubles, which she tied onto tree branches with ribbon bows. That was just the beginning. She marbleized mini wooden trees, then graduated to ceramic ones. "We kept chanting, 'Does...it...marble?'" she jokes.

Jennifer also uses marbled papers—from Paper Source, not her Italian souvenirs—in clever ways that go beyond gift wrap. The wreath that crowns her Wonka-esque candy buffet is made from leaves cut from marbled cardstock and glued to a wreath form. She puts her little elves (sons Jack and Davy) to work making marbled paper chains, which Jennifer considers one of the easiest, most affordable ways to coordinate holiday decor around the house. The chains twirl around her tree and tuck into doorway garlands.

In the course of swirling up her very marbled Christmas, Jennifer figured out why she is so taken by the decorative potential of these patterns. It's because they're a mix of the natural and the glam, especially in the sophisticated pastels she favors. In other words, they're a model for how Jennifer wants her home to look and feel at Christmas and the other 364 days of the year: a little bit fancy but not at all fussy. ✻

ALL THE TRIMMINGS The tree sports just four elements—paper chains, silver bead garland, iridescent balls, and marbled cutouts—but still looks abundant, *opposite*. "We kept the mix restrained but loaded it up," says Jennifer, *above center*. Packages are wrapped in coordinating paper, *above left*.

SWEET SPOT The candy buffet Jennifer sets up on an antique dresser in the living room, *above right*, brings her palette to life. It stays out all season long, both for its festive look and for sampling. On the wall, she drapes artwork with garland and a wreath, an easy DIY made from marbled paper cutout leaves. The boys' stockings hang front and center on the dresser.

TREAT NOOK Davy and Jack pack up cookies for the neighbors in the kitchen, *above*, which Jennifer dresses for the holidays with a charmingly asymmetrical garland featuring paper chains made by the boys, plus ribbon and a string of rainbow felt balls. An easy icing technique gives classic sugar cookies a marbled finish, *opposite*. Just drizzle two or three colors of thin icing on top of a bowl of white icing, lightly swirl the colors together with a toothpick, then dip the top of each cookie straight in and out. Once they're dry, the cookies are loaded into small bakery boxes lined with colorful food-grade tissue paper and tied with a marbled ribbon.

1

2

4
PATINA MODERN
VOGUE LIVING HOUSES, GARDENS, PEOPLE
THOMAS O'BRIEN
Designing History
Michael S. Smith
VEERE GRENNEY
GLAMOROUS LIVING

5

Give It a Swirl

Jennifer DeCleene surprised herself with how many ways she could incorporate the marbled look. Try some of her easy DIYs and holiday decorating ideas.

1 good on paper

A gift wrapped in marbled paper needs nothing more than a simple bow. Jennifer uses wide silk chiffon ribbon with frayed edges. Solid pastel papers are tied with marbled satin ribbons, which she orders by the bolt from Zazzle.

2 one of a kind

Here's a good look at the results of dipping super-cheap wooden cutouts ($8 for 25 on Amazon) into a water-marbling bath. "I love all the fluid, painterly swirls and how no two ornaments are alike," Jennifer says.

3 in the round

Jennifer carried the theme to an easy DIY wreath made out of marbled cardstock from Amazon. She cut out a bunch of identical leaf shapes, lightly folded them in half for dimension, then hot-glued them to an 18-inch wire wreath form, overlapping layers slightly.

4 fancy tree

Jennifer used the same marbling technique as the wooden ornaments to decorate this ceramic tree—but on a larger scale. She filled a big storage tub with warm water, then followed the package instructions on the marbling medium to get the proportions of color, medium, and water just right. "Be patient," says Jennifer. "The more water you use, the longer it takes for the medium to dissolve."

5 sweet station

The candies are store-bought except for the swirled peppermint bark, which Jennifer makes by melting rows of white, pink, and red chocolate wafers along with a few drops of peppermint extract evenly spaced around a glass baking dish. She then lightly swirls the colors together with a toothpick.

6 hung with care

A mantel isn't the only place to hang a stocking. Jennifer had Jack and Davy's stockings made to match her Christmas palette then added layers of ribbons and an initial ornament.

Three Bases

Three Styles

A trifecta of craft essentials—papier-mâché cones and ornaments and wire wreath forms—creates the foundation for oh-so-tempting trimmings in three charming decorating themes.

writer **PAMELA PORTER** *photographer* **JASON DONNELLY** *stylist* **JOSEPH WANEK** *producer* **SUZONNE STIRLING**

These papers are new reproductions, but you can use vintage ephemera in pretty prints. Look for wallpaper, gift wrap, maps, or package labels.

Instructions begin on *page 94*.

1.

Textured & Traditional

Vintage-style papers nod to holidays past in these three projects. Add a touch of cornflower blue to complement traditional red and green.

LOOP TREES Inspired by German Spanbaum trees, these ones, *above left*, are made from folded-over paper rather than the traditional curled wood. Fashion loops from strips of paper then glue in rows, working from bottom to top, to cover a papier-mâché cone.

DECOUPAGE ORNAMENTS These lightweight bulbs, *above right*, are simple to make to dress up a plain garland. Use Mod Podge to adhere strips of pattered paper to papier-mâché ornaments. When dry, apply a few more coats to seal the paper and give the ornament a protective finish.

LEAF WREATH No hooks or nails are required for this freestanding ring, *left*. The simple profile of the laurel-shaped leaves are easy to make. Cut the leaves from a mix of paper, and hot-glue them to a floral wire ring. Tuck in berry stems for a pop of red, then secure a bow at the bottom. Attach the wreath to a wooden plaque to display upright.

2.

Mod & Merry

Create an attention-grabbing holiday scene with glitter and punchy hues. This eye-popping combination gives the three craft bases a candy-color makeover.

FACETED TREES Standing tall, hexagonal pyramid trees look sensational from every angle, *above left*. Make triangle shapes from colorful flocked and glittered papers, then glue them to a papier-mâché cone. For a finished look, secure shiny trim over the seams.

BEJEWELED ORNAMENTS Whether trimming a tree or topping a gift, geometric gems punch things up a notch, *above right*. Cut shapes from the same paper used to make the faceted trees to fit the sides of an ornament. Attach them with glue. Adhere silver trim over the seams. Pair with a tassel for extra flair.

MODERN WREATH This low-profile wreath makes a bold statement, *right*. Hot-glue slim wooden dowels on top of a nested wire wreath form, then spray-paint a singular hue. Adhere glitter and flocked paper to poster board before attaching to the back of the form. Finish with a dimensional bow cut from flocked paper (use our printable template to assemble your own).

Boost the sparkle factor of thin glitter paper by coating it with Mod Podge and sprinkling with coarse glitter.

For a fuller look or to combine more than one color of tulle, layer lengths of the material first before sewing together.

3.

Grace & Elegance

Achieve a classic Nutcracker ballet vibe without breaking out pointe shoes or tutus. Easy techniques transform craft bases into romantic accents worthy of a spotlight.

TULLE TREE Like a ballerina, a beautiful flouncy skirt takes center stage on this holiday tablescape, *above left*. Use a running stitch to gather lengths of tulle. Working one row at a time, secure the gathered material to a papier-mâché cone using hot glue. Top with embellishments such as faux berries or leaves.

GILDED ORNAMENTS Dramatic and timeless, Moravian stars lend stoic dimension, *above right*. Paint papier-mâché stars with a pearl-finish paint. Once dry, apply faux gold leaf to the ornaments. Brush away excess leaf with a paintbrush. Display on a tree or tabletop or hang from garland.

CHANDELIER WREATH With its candlelit glow, this fixture is the true crowning glory, *left*. Knot ribbon equidistant across a wire ring, then drape faux crystal garland between the lengths of ribbon. Cover the form with greenery, berries, and clip-on battery-operated candles. Hang from the ceiling or an existing light fixture.

Instructions

1.

Textured & Traditional

pages 88-89

LOOP TREES

MATERIALS

- Ruler
- Pencil
- Decorative paper
- Scissors or paper trimmer
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Papier-mâché cones in assorted sizes

1. Using a ruler as a guide, lightly trace ¾-inch-wide strips on the back side of decorative paper. Cut along the lines using scissors or a paper trimmer, then trim strips into 4½-inch lengths.

2. With the decorative side out, bring the ends of the paper together to make a loop. Use hot glue on low heat to glue the ends together. Repeat with all strips.

3. Working from the bottom up, glue loops to the cone, making sure each row overlaps the one below it to hide the top edges of each loop. If needed, make loops near the top thinner or shorter to fit as desired.

4. Wrap a small strip of paper around the tip of the cone; secure with hot glue.

DECOUPAGE ORNAMENTS

MATERIALS

- Decorative paper
- Scissors or paper trimmer
- Papier-mâché ball ornaments
- Mod Podge in matte finish
- Paintbrushes
- Crafts paint (optional)

1. For abstract patterned paper (such as a floral design): Cut several pieces of paper into long ½-inch-wide strips using scissors or a paper trimmer. Make small cuts along the sides to help the paper lay flat on the ornament. For uniformly patterned paper (such as a geometric design): Cut several pieces of paper into long ⅛- to ¼-inch-wide strips using scissors or a paper trimmer.

2. Brush Mod Podge on the back side of one paper strip and apply to the ornament, smoothing the sides as you go. Repeat, positioning each piece of paper directly next to the last until the ornament is covered. Let dry.

3. If desired, brush a few light strokes of paint in a coordinating hue on the ornament to highlight certain areas. Let dry.

4. Brush up to two coats of Mod Podge over the ornament for a smooth finish. Let dry.

LEAF WREATH

MATERIALS

- Glue stick
- Patterned paper scraps
- Cardstock in shades of green
- Printable Leaves pattern (go to *BHG.com/3Bases3Styles*)
- Scissors
- Wire snips
- Floral wire
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Faux berry stems
- Florists tape
- 14-inch metal wreath form
- Ribbon
- Small, round wooden plaque

1. Using a glue stick, adhere scraps of patterned paper to cardstock. Let dry.

2. Print the Leaves template and cut out. Trace several leaf shapes of each size on the back of the patterned paper. Cut out.

3. Use wire snips to cut floral wire into several 12-inch-long pieces. Fold leaves in half lengthwise. Use hot glue to secure one end of floral wire along the back folded edge of a leaf. Repeat with all leaves.

4. Group leaves into bunches of two or three mixed-size leaves. Add a berry stem to half of the bunches. Bind each bunch together using floral tape.

5. Place one bunch on top of a wire wreath form so the leaves are about 3 inches from the top of the form; secure to the form using florists tape. Place another bunch over and slightly below the first bunch; secure with florists tape. Repeat, alternating bunches with and without berries, until you reach the bottom of the wreath. Repeat on the other side of the form.

6. Hot-glue a ribbon bow to the bottom center of the wreath.

7. Hot-glue the wreath form upright to a wooden plaque.

2.

Mod & Merry

pages 90-91

FACETED TREES

MATERIALS

- Printable Tree pattern (go to *BHG.com/3Bases3Styles*)
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Glitter cardstock
- Plain cardstock
- Self-adhesive flocked paper
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Papier-mâché cones in various sizes
- Strong multi-use adhesive glue (such as E6000)
- Silver ribbon

1. Print the Tree pattern; adjust the size to fit your papier-mâché cones. Cut out. Lightly trace patterns on the backside of cardstock (we traced half on glitter cardstock and half on plain cardstock).

2. Remove the backing from self-adhesive flocked paper and press on the front side of the plain cardstock. Cut out all triangle panels.

3. Alternating the panels, use a hot-glue gun set to low to attach the panels to a papier-mâché cone.

4. Once all panels are secure, use adhesive to cover the seams with silver ribbon.

BEJEWELED ORNAMENTS

MATERIALS

- Faceted papier-mâché ornaments
- Scrap paper
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glitter cardstock
- Self-adhesive flocked paper
- Quick-setting crafts glue
- Silver ribbon
- Colorful store-bought tassels (optional)

1. Make your own template by placing a papier-mâché ornament on scrap paper and tracing around a facet. Cut out.

2. On glitter cardstock and self-adhesive flocked paper, use the template to trace and cut enough of the facet shapes to cover the ornament in half of each paper.

3. Remove the backing from the flocked paper shapes and press to secure to the ornament. Use quick-setting glue to secure the glitter shapes to the ornament. Glue silver ribbon over the seams.

4. If desired, tie a tassel to the ornament string.

MODERN WREATH

MATERIALS

- Metal wreath forms in three sizes (we used 8-, 14-, and 19-inch forms)
- Poster boards
- Pencil
- 24 6-inch dowels
- Strong multi-use adhesive glue (such as E6000)
- Spray paint (we used light pink)
- Tracing paper
- Scissors
- Self-adhesive flocked paper
- Glitter cardstock
- Glue stick
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Printable Bow pattern (go to *BHG.com/3Bases3Styles*)

1. Place the largest wreath form on top of a piece of poster board. Nest the other two forms equidistant inside. Holding in place, lightly trace around the exterior of each form. Remove the poster board and set aside to cut and use as templates later. Place a second sheet of poster board under the forms and trace again.

2. Set dowels on top of the wreath forms to create 24 equidistant sections. Attach the dowels by applying dabs of strong adhesive glue where the dowels meet each form. Let dry. Remove poster board and set aside to use as the wreath backing later.

3. Flip the wreath over and place on a protected work surface in a well-ventilated area. Apply two to three light coats of spray paint; let dry between coats.

4. Cut along the lines of the first piece of poster board; you should have two rings (one large, one small). Discard the center circle. Use the large poster board ring as a template to measure and trace onto self-adhesive flocked paper. Cut out, then remove the backing from the flocked paper and press onto the outermost ring of the second piece of poster board.

5. Repeat, using the small ring of poster board to trace onto and cut glitter paper. Use a glue stick to secure to the innermost ring on the second piece of poster board next to the flocked paper.

6. Cut away the remaining areas on the second piece of poster board (the center and outer area). You should be left with a donut shape covered with flocked and glitter paper. This is the wreath backing.

7. Secure the wreath backing onto the dowel wreath form using hot glue.

8. Print the Bow pattern; adjust size as needed. Trace the pattern onto poster board and cut out. Apply self-adhesive flocked paper onto the poster board; cut out. Fold the top pieces to create a bow shape; hot-glue at the back. Fold the middle piece over the center bow shape; hot-glue at the back. Hot-glue the tails at an angle at the back of the bow shape. Hot-glue the bow to the bottom center of the wreath.

3.

Grace & Elegance

pages 92-93

TULLE TREE

MATERIALS

- Sewing needle
- Strong thread
- 6-inch-wide roll or strips of tulle
- Fabric scissors
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Papier-mâché cone (approximately 18x5 inches)
- Quick-setting fabric glue
- Assorted faux berries and embellishments

1. Thread a needle and knot the ends together. Unroll tulle on a flat surface and either work from the roll or cut manageable lengths, sewing a running stitch along the top edge. Pull tulle to gather it against the knotted end, then pull the thread taut and knot to secure. Repeat to create enough gathered pieces of tulle to cover the cone.

2. Use a low-heat hot-glue gun to attach the gathered edge of the tulle to the cone. (Align the bottom edge with the bottom of the cone.) Repeat around the cone, attaching tulle pieces close together until the lower portion of the cone is covered. Repeat with additional rows, making sure the tulle pieces cover the edges of each row below. Work from bottom to top.

3. To cover the top of the cone, layer a few squares of tulle together and adhere with small dabs of fabric glue, overlapping the row below.

4. Arrange the embellishments as desired and adhere with fabric glue concealed between the layers of tulle.

GILDED ORNAMENTS

MATERIALS

- Papier-mâché Moravian stars
- Acrylic crafts paint in pearl finish
- Paintbrush
- Toothbrush
- Gilding adhesive
- Faux gold leaf

1. Paint star ornaments with two coats of paint, allowing them to dry between coats.

2. On a protected work surface, use a toothbrush to dab or flick gilding adhesive on the star.

3. When adhesive becomes tacky, press faux gold leaf sheets to the adhesive-covered areas and brush away excess.

CHANDELIER WREATH

MATERIALS

- 9 yards 2¼-inch-wide ribbon: light pink, medium pink
- Measuring tape or ruler
- Scissors
- 19-inch metal wreath form
- 3 yards ribbon in various widths and colors
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Faux crystal garland
- Paddle wire
- Wire cutters
- Faux greenery and berries
- Battery-operated clip-on candles

1. Cut six 18-inch lengths each of the light pink and medium pink ribbon. Stack into pairs. Tie the pairs equidistant around the wreath form. Bring all lengths together and knot at the top. This will become what the wreath hangs from.

2. Cut other widths and colors of ribbon; create six bundles of six equal lengths. Hot-glue each bundle together, then glue to the wire frame so that each bundle aligns with one of the knotted ribbons.

3. Use hot glue to secure faux crystal garland between each ribbon bundle, creating swags around the form.

4. Use paddle wire and hot glue to attach pieces of faux greenery and berries around the form until covered.

5. Attach battery-operated clip-on candles to the form between each of the knotted ribbons.

Final Bough

> “Gather ornaments in different shapes, sizes, and textures when decorating a tree or garland to make the fir look fuller and more finished.”
>
> –PRODUCER LESLIE POYZER

TREE TASSEL Create a playful bauble, *top left*, by stringing wooden beads onto a cotton yarn tassel then submerging the entire ornament into a dye bath (we used Tulip brand).

CRAFTY WRAP For a unified look under the tree, *top right*, stick to kraft paper in simple patterns and ribbons that match the ornaments.

LUSH GARLAND For opulent greenery, *above left*, add ornaments in several shapes, colors, and finishes. Complete the look with wood bead garland and cozy knit stockings.

CHALKY FINISH Repurpose an old ornament by brushing it in acrylic paint then immediately rolling it in baking soda for a textured look, *above right*.

PHOTOGRAPHER: ADAM ALBRIGHT

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